

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 07198 032022Z

65-62

ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-07 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 SAM-01 SP-02 IO-03 PRS-01

ACDA-10 L-01 TRSE-00 /061 W
----- 034662

P 031855Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7355

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS PRIORITY

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 7198

LIMDIS

FROM AMBASSADOR LODGE'S OFFICE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VT, LE

SUBJECT: VATICAN AND LEBANON

REF: ROME 6215

1. FOUR-MAN VATICAN MISSION TO LEBANON RETURNED LAST WEEK FOLLOW-
ING INTENSIVE ROUND OF TALKS WITH CATHOLIC HIERARCHY, CIVIL
AUTHORITIES (PRESIDENT FRANJIEH AND PM KARAMI) AND LEADERS OF
VARIOUS POLITICAL MOVEMENTS, INCLUDING ARAFAT OF PLO, JUMBLAT
OF MOSLEM LEFT, AND PIERRE GEMAYEL, LEADER OF CHRISTIAN FALANGE,
MINISTER OF INTERIOR CHAMOUN, HEAD OF NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY.
OVER WEEKEND, WE HAD DEBRIEF FROM MEMBER OF MISSION, HIGHLIGHTS
OF WHICH WERE AS FOLLOWS:

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 07198 032022Z

2. VATICAN MISSION BELIEVES IT ACCOMPLISHED PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF MAKING WORLD AWARE OF PAIN WHICH POPE PAUL FEELS FOR SUFFERING OF LEBANESE PEOPLE AND OF POPE'S PREOCCUPATION FOR DANGER HANGING OVER SURVIVAL OF LEBANESE INSTITUTIONS AND IDENTITY OF LEBANESE NATION; OF ASSURING LEBANESE THAT POPE PAUL WOULD CONTINUE EFFORTS FOR RETURN OF PEACE AND FOR FINDING SOLUTION TO CRISIS; AND OF ASSESSING DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING CHARITABLE WORKS.

3. VATICAN SOURCE STATED THAT VATICAN MISSION CHIEF MSGR. BRINI WAS PLEASED BY AMBASSADOR BROWN'S WIDE-RANGING AND IMPRESSIVE BRIEFING. VATICAN CONCLUDED THAT US ACTION TO SEND AMB. BROWN TO BEIRUT WAS SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT POSITIVE WESTERN ACTION IN LAST SIX MONTHS ON LEBANON. AMB. BROWN'S PRESENCE WAS PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE WITH RESPECT TO CHRISTIAN ELEMENTS. BY AMELIORATING SIEGE MENTALITY AND FEELING OF ABANDONMENT IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, AMERICAN PRESENCE THROUGH AMB. BROWN, ACCORDING TO VATICAN, ACTED AS CATALYST FOR SERIOUS COMMITMENT ON PART OF CHRISTIANS TO FINDING SOLUTION OUT OF CRISIS.

4. DURING WEEK-LONG TRIP, VATICAN MISSION ALSO GATHERED FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS REGARDING EXISTING REALITIES IN LEBANON. IN PARTICULAR, VATICAN MISSION WAS:

-- IMPRESSED AND PUZZLED BY SOVIET ACTIVITY IN LEBANON AS RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR REPORTEDLY HELD THREE MEETINGS WITH JUMBLAT DURING MISSION'S STAY IN LEBANON.

--CONVINCED THAT JUMBLAT'S OBJECTIVES ARE "LIMITLESS" AND THAT HIS EVENTUAL DEMANDS FOR SOLUTION(E.G. DIRECT ELECTION OF PRESIDENT BY MAJORITY; RAPID ESTABLISHMENT OF NON-CONFESSIONAL STATE) WOULD ESCALATE TO DEGREE HIS POWER BASE GROWS AMONG MOSLEM POPULATION AND TO DEGREE IRAQ, USSR AND LIBYAN SUPPORT OF HIS AIMS IS INTENSIFIED. THUS VATICAN WAS CONVINCED OF NEED FOR URGENT SOLUTION TO CRISIS BEFORE LARGE SECTOR OF MOSLEM POPULATION DRIFTED ITS ADHERENCE FROM TRADITIONAL MOSLEM LEADERS TO JUMBLAT'S PROGRAM.

--LED TO CONCLUDE THAT RAPID RESOLUTION PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION, IN ACCORDANCE RECENT AGREEMENT, WAS NECESSARY TO BEGIN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 07198 032022Z

PROCESS OF GOVERNMENTAL AND INSTITUTIONAL READJUSTMENTS ESSENTIAL TO REESTABLISHING ORDER AND BEGINNING RECONSTRUCTION.

--IMPRESSED THAT SYRIAN ROLE WAS CONSTRUCTIVE AND REMAINED ESSENTIAL WHILE AT SAME TIME THREAT OF ISRAELI INTERVENTION CONTINUES AS POSITIVE ELEMENT IN EQUATION.

--TOLD THAT CHRISTIANS RETAINED CAPABILITY OF DEFENDING PORT

OF BEIRUT, PROVIDED PRESENT BALANCE OF POWER WAS NOT UPSET
BY ARMS REINFORCEMENT OF MOSLEM LEFT.

5. VATICAN UNDERSTANDS THAT FRENCH HAVE EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS
ASSIST IN CREATION OF NEW TYPE OF LEBANESE SECURITY POLICE
FORCE, INITIALLY FOR BEIRUT. (COMMENT: ANOTHER SOURCE HAS TOLD
US THAT VATICAN WAS SERIOUSLY PREOCCUPIED BY "FACT" THAT
RECENTLY FRENCH PROPOSAL THAT EC ASSIST RECONSTRUCTION OF LEBANON
WAS DEFEATED BY VOTE OF 8 TO 1 IN EC COUNCIL).

6. COMMENT: VATICAN INTENDS PURSUE CONSULTATIONS WITH INTER-
ESTED PARTIES TO STRESS NEED FOR URGENT INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL
SUPPORT FOR REESTABLISHMENT COEXISTENCE IN LEBANON AND FOR
PROTECTING LEBANESE INTEGRITY. IT WILL ALSO INTENSIFY ITS
EFFORTS TO ATTRACT INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE IN FIELDS OF HUMANI-
TARIAN AND RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE FOR LEBANON. WITH RESPECT
TO POLITICAL OBJECTIVES, WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT THIS VATICAN
MISSION (WHICH UPDATED FINDINGS OF NOV. 1975 CARDINAL BERTOLI
MISSION) CAME AWAY DEEPLY SHAKEN BY CULTURAL AND MATERIAL DAMAGE
IN LEBANON AND THAT VATICAN NOW HAS GREATER APPRECIATION OF
SYRIAN ROLE IN CRISIS. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT MISSION, WHILE
IN BEIRUT, SUPPORTED EFFORTS TO GET PRESIDENT FRANJIEH TO
SIGN DOCUMENT PERMITTING NEW ELECTION FOR PRESIDENT AND THAT
VATICAN MISSION ENCOURAGED CHRISTIAN ELEMENTS TO SEEK OUT
OPPORTUNITIES FOR QUICK COMPROMISE SOLUTION TO POLITICAL CRISIS.
AS INDICATION OF LATTER IS STATEMENT MADE BY MSGR. BRINI TO
VATICAN RADIO UPON HIS RETURN TO ROME, TO WIT: "FIRST CRAFTMEN
FOR REESTABLISHMENT OF COEXISTENCE MUST BE LEBANESE THEMSELVES"
AND THAT THIS SHOULD BE DONE WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF AN ORIGINAL
FORMULA INSPIRED FROM LEBANESE TRADITION "UPDATED ACCORDING
TO NEEDS OF TODAY'S CONDITIONS".VOLPE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETING REPORTS, VISITS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ROME07198
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760169-0934
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760598/aaaadfmv.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 76 ROME 6215
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 MAR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <29 JUL 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VATICAN AND LEBANON
TAGS: PFOR, VT, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006